



# Indiana State Department of Health

## Epidemiology Resource Center

### Quick Facts

#### **About...Mycoplasma pneumonia**

##### **What is Mycoplasma pneumonia?**

Mycoplasma infection is respiratory illness caused by bacteria called *Mycoplasma pneumonia*.

It is not a reportable disease and do not know how many cases are in Indiana each year.

##### **What are the symptoms of Mycoplasma pneumonia?**

Symptoms include fever, cough, bronchitis, sore throat, headache and tiredness. A common result of mycoplasma is pneumonia (sometimes called "walking pneumonia" because it is usually mild and rarely requires people to have to stay at the hospital). Ear infections can result. Symptoms may last for a few days to more than a month. Symptoms generally begin 15 to 25 days after being around it. The symptoms can develop slowly, over a period of two to four days. It may lead to pneumonia, which develops in 5-10% of cases.

##### **How is Mycoplasma pneumonia spread?**

Mycoplasma is spread through contact with droplets from the nose and throat of people with the disease, especially when they cough and sneeze. Spread is thought to require long periods of time with close contact with an infected person. Spread in families, schools and institutions occurs slowly. This period is probably fewer than 10 days and occasionally longer. Diagnosis is difficult; therefore, finding outbreaks timely is also difficult. This makes it hard to prevent more cases in outbreak.

##### **Who is at risk for getting Mycoplasma pneumonia?**

Persons of all ages are at risk but rarely children less than 5 years old. It is the leading cause of pneumonia in school-age children and young adults. Outbreaks can occur in crowded settings such as military and college settings. Outbreaks in these settings can last many months.

## **How do I know if I have Mycoplasma pneumonia?**

Mycoplasma infection is usually diagnosed by a doctor or health care professional based on symptoms. A blood test is helpful in sure diagnosis, but is not always positive.

## **How is Mycoplasma pneumonia treated?**

Antibiotics medicines may be prescribed. However, because mycoplasma infection usually goes away on its own, treatment of mild symptoms is not always necessary.

## **How is Mycoplasma pneumonia prevented?**

At this time, there are no vaccines for mycoplasma infection. As with any respiratory disease, all people should cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and wash their hands frequently.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site at:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/mycoplasmapneum\\_t.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/mycoplasmapneum_t.htm)

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